

Application No. 10/254,168
Amendment "A" dated June 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action mailed March 8, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1-44 are pending, wherein claims 1 and 32 have been amended and new claim 44 has been added.

The claims as now presented are believed to be patentable over the prior art of record, including U.S. patent No. 2,740,505 to Flora and U.S. Patent No. 6,148,576 to Janopaul, Jr. As discussed with the Examiner during a telephonic interview held on June 7, 2004, neither Flora nor Janopaul teach or suggest a connector having the combination of features recited in the claims. In particular, Flora and Janopaul fail to teach or suggest a connector having penetrating, mesial and trailing segments and "orienting means, disposed at or near where the mesial and trailing segments intersect, for limiting penetration of the connector through an insulating layer at a predetermined depth" (emphasis to show added claim language). In an office action issued in the parent application dated March 10, 2004, it was alleged that elements 12 and 14 of Flora (*see* Figures 1-4) and element 35a of Janopaul (*see* Figure 9) comprise "orienting means". However, since these elements are at the far end of the connectors they are not "disposed at or near where the mesial and trailing segments intersect". Because of this, there is no "trailing segment" that can "reside within a second structural layer" as recited elsewhere in claim 1.

Claim 25 as originally filed is also patentable over Flora and Janopaul because it recites "at least one protrusion extending laterally from the web portion at or near where the mesial and trailing segments intersect" (emphasis added). Claim 27 is similarly patentable.

New claim 44 is identical in scope to claim 17 of the parent application, which was deemed to be patentable over Flora and Janopaul because "they fail to show or teach the use of a connector having the limitations of claims 1 or 23 in combination with a trailing wall extending at least partially between sidewalls at an end of said body within the trailing segment". Office Action, page 8.

Claim 32 is patentable over Flora and Janopaul because "the examiner can also find no proper motivation to use Janopaul's connector in the method as claimed in claims 25 or 28. While several references, such as Long '574, teach that it is known to form a wall panel in the manner claimed by applicant, they do not disclose or teach the use of connector of the type claimed by applicant in claim 1 or claim 23". Office Action, page 8. It therefore follows that claim 32 is patentable, since it recites the use of similar connectors (*i.e.*, those of claims 1, 25

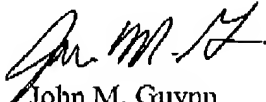
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and/or 27). Claim 36 is patentable based on similar reasoning (*i.e.*, claim 36 claims the composite wall structure itself).

In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by examiner amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 7th day of June 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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